

HISRRORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM DESERT
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

O. H. 11

LES & JEANETTE YOXSIMER

Interviewed by

Patricia Young

January 11, 1980

INTERVIEWEES: LES & JEANETTE YOXSIMER

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SUBJECT:

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TRANSCRIBER: Linda A. Jantzen

PY: This is an interview with Les and Jeanette Yoxsimer for the Historical Society of Palm Desert. The interviewer is Patricia Young, and it is taking place at the Yoxsimer's home on Pinion in Palm Desert. The date is Friday, January 11, 1980, and the time is nine thirty in the morning.

LY: Any time you feel like . . .

PY: You can begin now discussing some of what Rancho Mirage was like when you first came.

LY: My first time in Rancho Mirage, or the first time I seen Rancho Mirage was in 1946. I came out from Ohio with my brother on a week's visit. And, of course, I had to go to Palm Springs and make all the various places that I'd heard about. Well, of course, we went through Palm

Desert, Rancho Mirage. Cathedral City was there. But my first view of Rancho Mirage and Palm Desert was absolutely nothing in either place. Of course, there was, in Palm Desert, at the time I thought it was a swimming pool, but it later turned out to be an irrigation holding tank apparently, on the north side of the highway, which was there for many years. I don't think it's been too long ago that it was taken out. Then I returned to Indio in 1950 to live, and I spent exactly one year in Indio. And I was in the plumbing business with my brother. And it wasn't that lucrative at that time. And so I decided to go back into the business that I knew best which was the service station business. And one day I noticed in the paper there was a station and cafe combination to lease in Rancho Mirage. And I stopped in. We happened to be plumbing a house in Rancho Mirage at that time, so I stopped in that day. And Jack Nattenson and his wife Ann owned the station and cafe. And since my wife had always managed and owned a cafe in Findlay, Ohio, and I had always been in the service station business, we decided that would be our cup of tea. And at that time there was only one other place in Rancho Mirage that you could get a

sandwich or a beer or something of that order, and that was, I don't remember her name at the time. She later married Fred Chisum, who was a local artist. And Evelyn's cafe was located where Honey's is now. And so my wife and I went then moved to Rancho Mirage in June of 1951. At that time the businesses, of course, in Rancho Mirage were few and far between. Sid Greenleaf was our postmaster at the time and, if I remember correctly, and I think I do, we had what was then a sixth-class post office. And I can well remember Sid saying, I think his salary was something like six dollars and odd cents a week, being a very hard working person before he retired from the job, he had a first-class post office there. We did have some businesses in Rancho Mirage. Mike and Ann Pacino had their drapery shop there at that time. They were probably the first of the interior decorating people that were on the desert. Mike had worked for a large company in Los Angeles, one of the big companies. And I don't remember the name of it, but he had decided the desert was for him, so he and Ann opened their drapery shop. At that time there was no grocery stores in Rancho Mirage. We had to go to Cathedral City to do most of our

shopping. And it seems to me, if I remember correctly, there was a grocery store in Palm Desert located possibly around where the Houston Lumber Company is at this time. That could be wrong. But anyhow, we did most of our shopping in Cathedral City. It wasn't too long after that that Curt Ring, who was probably more Indian than Anglo because he had always spent so much of his time among the Indians and he came to Rancho Mirage, where he wasn't a stranger apparently, and opened our first grocery store. Ernie Martin built the building. And it was in about where Hague's Dates is at the present time. And Curt opened this market and called it Kiva Market. So that was our first grocery store, known as Kiva Market. And we thought, you know, we were in heaven. You could almost go across the street to do your shopping. To follow that line of thought, that store was in there for a number of years. And then it grew like Topsy. And a man by the name of Cal Brown, who owned the property where the Jergensen Center is now, had that rezoned in that area and built a store in there. And they closed the old Kiva Market and Curt moved up to the new one and maintained it for a short time. Curt didn't stay there too

long. Itchy feet or whatever happened and a Mr. Wright bought the store, Everett Wright. And Everett and his wife ran Kiva Market for some time, and then it became known as Wright's, I think. And then eventually Everett's store was bought by Jergensen. Everett remained as manager for some time and finally dropped out and went to cleaning pools. And shortly after that he passed away. But to go back to the earlier days, you might like to know some of the people who lived here when I came. One was Ruthie Warburton, I don't know whether you ever heard of Ruthie or not. She had been married to Cotton Warburton at one time, who was a great star on the USC football team. Ruthie had been in the movies as an actress. She owned what was known as the Red Roof Ranch. And to get to the Red Roof Ranch you turned off of Highway 111 at approximately where, what do they call that first area there in Thunderbird as you're heading west, Thunderbird North or . . .

PY:

LY: No. Gee, I should know what it is, but before you get to Thunderbird itself, there's another little group of houses in there. Isn't so small anymore, it's quite large, but at that time, you just turned off the road

into a very narrow lane, dust and what have you, and drove across a wash. And you drove back in there about a half a mile and you came to the ranch house. You had no idea such a magnificent place would possibly stand back there. She had a lot of parties back there. And many people came that were well-known people in the movie industry. And I was back there on many occasions. Of course, I did work for her. One of her very good friends, one of our very good friends, in fact, was Estelle Yuert. Now Estelle was probably one, outside of Don Cameron, she was probably one of the first real estate people out here. And she was a very, very hard worker. I would, I don't know, but maybe Estelle might still be living. If she is, she's quite a woman. Her husband Edgar was the first contractor at Rancho Mirage and built, as far as I can tell you, he built most of the first homes that were built there. And he employed local people, a few wetbacks. Of course, in those days we had wetbacks. It wasn't hard to find labor because there was plenty of people available. Ed was one of the finest persons that you could imagine. He was, I guess you'd call him a successful builder, even though later on he had an accident. And it was on the corner of San

Jacinto and the velt. And those were days when you wonder how an accident could happen because there was nothing on either street but he was broadsided at that corner. And Ed was never the same after that. And went down the hill rather rapidly. Estelle later on had a tremendous heart attack, survived it and, as I just mentioned before, as far as I know, she might still be living. The last I knew they had gone to Riverside, and Ed, of course, had passed on. I want to give credit to Jack and Ann Nattenson. Jack has been gone for some time, but Ann is still living. And still traveling around and participating, she's a volunteer out at the hospital at Eisenhower, and she has made her mark here. But they were the first, really about the first, few people that had the confidence to open a business in Rancho Mirage. And I have to think back. Jack and Ann both came from Chicago. I don't know how they got out here, but they did. And Jack always was fond to tell me, when he built his service station, which is now the Pink Elephant Car Wash is located on this particular piece of ground, when Jack built his station, there wasn't an oil company that would deliver gas out here. There was no, they couldn't deliver enough gas out here

to make it worthwhile. He contacted all the major oil companies. They all turned him down, and finally the Shell dealer in Coachella agreed to deliver Jack gasoline. And that seems rather odd, you know, considering today, but nevertheless, Shell was still delivering when I took it over, when I leased it from Jack. And my wife and I done quite well in there. We had, maybe the cafe was fourteen to sixteen stools. My wife's sister was an active participant in it also. She lived with us and we had a daughter, and when we moved from Indio to Rancho Mirage, I think at that time she was three months old. And so she grew up in Rancho Mirage, and she's now, I think, twenty-eight or twenty-nine, so you can tell that I have many fond memories of those days. People who used to come into the cafe was Rudolph Fremmel, who as you know I think, wrote many operettas. And I think his most famous song is the "Indian Love Call." Rudolph used to stop in occasionally. And Steve Cochran, who was a budding movie star at the time, used to stop quite often. Of course, he tragically died later. Tragically, I don't know what happened. He died quite young. And, of course, we had many, many people in those days stop in who were famous or near famous. Anyhow, fifty-three I think it

was I had an opportunity to sell the business, which I did. I won't go into it. It was a rather strange transaction. (chuckle) On a Sunday morning, a young man came in, and he was from Detroit. And a girl was with him. Introduced her as his wife. Asked if the place was for sale. Being a Sunday morning and tired from seven days a week for two years, I was negotiable. I said, "Certainly anything's for sale in California." He said, "Well, how much do you want for it?" And I said, "Well, for five thousand dollars, I'll walk out and you walk in." In those days, that was a lot of money. He had the money in a money belt around his waist, and within a half an hour I think we made the transaction. I was out of business, and he was in business. And needless to say, I think he lasted maybe six or nine months. But I rested. At that time when we went to Rancho Mirage, there was no place really to live. Buildings were scarce, there was no homes, and we rented from Estelle Yuert on the velt. In fact, the house is still there, if we can call it a house. It's a rather square, green building with two rooms in it, both huge, and we lived there for awhile, almost a year. And then we rented a farmhouse from Mrs. Fisher over on

the corner of Rio Del Sol and Clancey Lane. Our neighbors was Hilda Mayer, and Helen and Frank Clancey lived across the street from us. And Mrs. Fisher owned the whole corner, which is now owned by Lloyd Tevis. But I think Lloyd has now sold it again. He had sold and moved to another area, not another area, but another part of Rancho on Clancey Lane. And we stayed there for a year, I think, a year and a half. Mrs. Fisher was still living, in fact. She lives at Indian Wells. And I just saw her here within the last month and a half. And so those are days of fond memories. The date orchards were all in full bloom. We had many grape ranches in the area. Paul Kersten had a packing shed on the corner of Bob Hope Drive, I'm calling it Bob Hope Drive, Rio Del Sol and Country Club, which is now Country Club. Farmhouse on the corner, Kersten's packing shed was the two main things there. Of course, across the street Hank Goerty owned a large house. But nevertheless, the packing shed was very active during the season. Many, many people worked in the shed. Hank Goerty had a large date ranch, a grape ranch rather, across the road which is now, of course, the Eisenhower area. Doc who had the Chevrolet agency in Indio and someplace up on the coast

for many, many years, had a very large grape ranch on Clancey Lane. A gentleman by the name of Hutchison had a hog ranch or pig ranch on Clancey Lane out there which he maintained for two or three years at great loss because the coyotes would raid his pigs every night, and he couldn't raise pigs because they would be eaten by the coyotes. And he finally gave that up as a bad venture. And I'm sort of rambling, if you don't mind, as things . . .

PY: The pig ranch, when was that up there?

LY: That would be in 1954 maybe, 1955, in that time. And he gave that up as a bad . . . it was on the, as I remember, called the Davis Ranch. Now I am assuming, in fact, I know it's gone now, but it was located on the, it would be the north side, I guess, or the west side of Clancey Lane. Let me see, so anyhow, after I left the Shell Station, as it were, I went home and for about three or four months tried just to relax. And I decided almost to retire at that time when a representative from the Richfield Oil Company and Isabell Cameron came down to the house one day. And they had to have a service station open in Rancho Mirage because the one I had left was not serving the purpose, it wasn't open and so forth, so

Richfield Oil Company, wasn't the Arco at that time, it was the Richfield, and was almost a local company because they only operated, I think, in four or five states on the coast. And they wanted a station opened. And it had had a number of operators in it. And they gave me, really, the station rent free. They paid the light bill, they paid me a twenty-five dollar a week subsidy and I could make my own hours, and anything to open up the station. So I did agree it up, which I did, and in 1953 my brother and his wife came out, and he went into business with me, only for a year or two. And then he went on to work for Holmes Pools. But I did stay there and saw the corner go from, well, I would open at eight in the morning, close at noon for, to go home for lunch, and I'd close at five-thirty in the afternoon. I didn't open up at all on Sundays, and it was exactly what I wanted. No stress. But the gallonage wasn't about a hundred gallons a day, and it was a retired person's place to work, I guess. And, of course, we all know what happened. As more and more people found the area, so to speak, we found that this type of living didn't exist and before long, I found myself back into the hustle and bustle of fourteen and sixteen hours

a day and seven days a week and so on and so forth, which was okay, I guess, because I was still young enough that I didn't mind it. And as time went on, why I eventually did buy the corner. And to bring you right up to date to the minute, it's no longer there. I, a year ago, sold it to Ernie Hawn for development on that corner. And again, one of the old places went down the tube to advancing civilization, I guess, as near as I can say. Then when we left Mrs. Fisher's home, or ranch house, which, by the way, in those days was a nice place. This was before the days of air conditioning, as you well know we had swamp coolers. Very nice place to live because it was in a grove and shady and it was really nice. Nevertheless, we bought then a, at that time, it was a fairly decent place. It was located on Rio Del Sol Road and is now right directly across from the entrance to the Las Palmas Country Club. In those days Hank Goerty had his hotel there. And for those of you who are not familiar with it, it was a drive-in restaurant with fly-in restaurant motel. You had a large airport there for private planes. I have seen probably maybe eight hundred to a thousand planes on the ground there. It seems like that many.

Maybe there wasn't that many, but I've seen the place parked full of small aircraft, small motors, one and two motor planes. And it was really one of the nice places, nicest places, on the desert. They had the dining room where you could sit and look out over the airport. People would fly in on Sunday mornings, whatever. He had a, well, you wouldn't exactly call it a motel and you wouldn't call it a hotel, but he had units there and people would come down. Some people came from Canada and stayed the whole winter. And it was quite a growing business. John and Edwin Noyce was managers there. There was managers ahead of them. I don't remember what their names were, but John and Eleanor, that's right, Noyce, they were the longest and as far as I was concerned the most successful. Then Hank, of course, his original units, of course, they're not there anymore. Of course, there's nothing there anymore. But during World War II they tried to raise out here on the desert a plant that rubber could be squeezed out of. I don't remember the name of it, but the government had built all these little shacks, we called them, or homes or whatever for these people to live in. And when the war was over and didn't prove

successful, and Hank bought those and brought them in and made the hotel units out of them. And they were there for, well, until they tore it down really. Bob Cummings used to shoot a lot of his shows on the grounds there. And I remember many times when we would go over in the evenings when Cummings and his group were there, sit around the pool and talk. And reminisce. Cummings made one of his shows, and I don't know how many remember, but it wasn't all that successful, apparently. But he had an automobile which he'd drive on the streets, and then he would just extend the wings and take off and fly like an airplane, which was quite a thing in those days. And they shot a series around that. Cummings, of course, was quite an aviator, flew his own plane, two motor job. In the fifties President Eisenhower started flying into Desert Air. Richfield maintained the plane for President Eisenhower for his use at the Desert Air. And maintained a limousine and a driver for his benefit and for Mamie's benefit. And so I was able to see them quite a lot. And going back to Hilda Mayer. Now Hilda lived on Clancey Lane, or not on Clancey Lane, but on Rio Del Sol directly across from Clancey Lane. Now Hilda lived there until

just a couple of three years ago. I think she's still working in Rancho Mirage. And I know she has a lot of fond memories of the place. Helen Clancey still lives on the corner of Clancey and Bob Hope Drive. A lot of people were very insensed at the road name change. I might throw a little light on that. At this point it's not exactly clear how that came about. But I'm aware of how the road change came about because I was one of the instigators of the name change. And Cliff Brown, who is now the publicist, I think, for the Eisenhower Center and all that, stopped in the station one day. And I knew Cliff quite well, and he asked me what I thought about changing the name of Rio Del Sol to Bob Hope Drive. I said, "Well, I don't think it should be changed to Bob Hope Drive, but I think the name Hope Drive would be nice," because at this point they were talking about putting in the hospital, the Eisenhower Medical Center. But prior to that, and this might be interesting to you, there are still a few people who are aware of it, but Hank Goerty wanted to put in a race track where the site of the hospital is now. In fact, on many occasions we did go to Riverside to appear before the County Board of Supervisors trying

to get them to rezone that area so a race track could be put in. We were turned down on several occasions and so the idea then was to incorporate. And if we incorporated, why we would have the race track because then we would have our own decision-making board and it could be done then without the County's okay. So Hank decided we would incorporate Rancho Mirage. And I was for it. Of course, I was in business and stood to profit by it. I thought, at least. And quite a battle ensued.

PY: When was this?

LY: This had to be in 1954 maybe, 1955. And one person who could probably fill you in on, quite a bit on this would be Dan Callahan. Are you aware of Danny Callahan? You see, Danny lived down on the ranch that Hank had down there at this time. And Dan was a, he was, let's see, a nephew of Hank's. And, of course, Dan knows where a lot of the skeletons are buried in the area, I'll tell you. But we did work on incorporation effort quite heavily, and another large group was against it, and it did cause a lot of bad feelings, especially in the small area. We did appear before, I think at that time they had, they didn't have LAPCO then. This was strictly a

matter for the Board of Supervisors. Maybe this was one of the reasons why LAPCO was formed, to take the heat off the Board of Supervisors. But I well remember of a lot of trips to Riverside, and a lot of people for and against, and some bad feelings ensued. And nevertheless, we were consistently turned down by the Board. There were more against than there was for and that was the way they made their decisions in those days. They called for a show of hands from the audience. And they sat there and tried to count the hands, which I guess you'd say was a rather democratic way to do it. But anyhow, we were turned down consistently. And finally after several years of trying they finally did get the Board of Supervisors to okay it. And there was a large demonstration one day. A bulldozer was brought in and everybody was invited out to the groundbreaking for the racetrack. And then afterwards, why everybody was taken down to the hotel and Hank gave everybody a lunch and it was on its way to becoming a racetrack. But unfortunately, fortunately, I guess, it didn't happen. At that time it had drag along so long and the people who were going to finance it and put up the money and they had lost interest apparently and the stock didn't sell. And so it

abandoned. And then Hank's fortunes kind of went down the hill, I guess and he had to sell, or did sell, the Desert Air as we knew it in those days. And you can see what's happened to the Desert Air now. It's not what it was by any means back in the good old days.

Another place that was here at that time was the White Sun Guest Ranch. And my earliest recollections of the White Sun Guest Ranch was Helen Denger living there and raising her family, quite a large family. Helen's husband, Jack Denger, owned the Cedar Travel Agency. Their offices was in New York City. And at that time, and still is, I guess, one of the premiere travel agencies in the world. But Helen was stuck on Rancho Mirage. She loved it. They had the ranch down there and a few units. Some of Helen's children were born at the ranch. Most of them attended Coachella Valley High School.

Some of my earliest memories of the guest ranch were beautiful. They had a swimming pool there, which is still there. We were all invited to use it. The natives have, we called ourselves natives because we stayed all summer. There wasn't too many of us. We were welcome to go down and use the facilities in the fall and in the winter. They had horseback rides out into

the desert at night, especially on moonlight nights. We would ride out on the sand for several miles. You can't do it anymore, of course, it's all built up. But in those days we could ride out and it was a, it's very hard to describe. You've seen the movies of the Sahara Desert, I suppose. And on a moonlight night, you'd see these ridges in the sand, the wind would blow. And it was out there all by yourself. Of course, there was always eight or ten of us in the group. Mike and Ann Bachino, Sid and Laura Greenleaf, my wife and I, my brother Richard and his wife Mildred, and Al Heine was a rangler and Helen would go and, usually they had several guests who were, who would go. Dorothy Newman, who was, I was trying to tell my wife the other day, Dorothy Newman was her name, was there quite a bit. Dorothy was sort of a character actor in the movies and television. She was appearing in everything, never a star, but she was always in demand. After the rides, we would then gather in the large room at the ranch and where there would be coffee served and cookies and group singing. Helen, I believe, and Al both played accordion, so there was many beautiful evenings were spent that way at the ranch. At that time,

. . . oh yes, it sure would be, wouldn't it? At that time, and if you'll notice the advertisement in front, that ranch has been owned by several people. Irving Cobb, I think, at one time. I know at one time it was a stagecoach stop. This was back many, many years ago, of course, but the same stagecoach line that stopped in Coachella, Indian Wells, the White Sun Guest Ranch, Banning and that way. This might be interesting to you. One day I was sitting there at the station and a very old gentleman stopped in. And I think he was on foot. And he sat there and regaled me of tales that happened when he was young. Now this had to go back I don't know how long. But he told me about driving cattle from the area we would now know as Anza and Agunga up over what is now 74. In those days there was no road, and he told me that they would make the cattle drive, would go down what is now 111, and they had a corral or a gathering yard about where the Palm Springs railroad station used to be, which isn't there anymore. And they would load cattle on the trains there at that time, which I thought was quite interesting. And he probably was seventy-five or eighty years old then, and he'd done this when he was a young man. California is pretty old, but at that time

they was going through what is now Rancho Mirage, coming down 74, which is in Palm Desert. And many times I've tried to imagine, you know, I could see the cattle coming down through there. But those things actually did happen. I do understand that Ernie Martin had told me that before the cove area was settled in Rancho Mirage, people used to come out, would park up in there with trailers or campers. You couldn't step out at night because there was too many rattlesnakes around. When it got dark you stayed inside. The winds at that time blew so hard that at times you'd have to lie down because the stones or rocks or coarse sand was that heavy in the air. My brother and a friend of his, Bill Hermann, Bill's still living, of course, I think lives over in across the mountain here in . . . I just said the name.

PY: Anza?

LY: Anza. His dad owned a ranch which is now Indian Wells Country Club. And Don and Bill had leased ground from Bill's dad. I've talked to Bill's dad and Bill's dad told me that he could stand on his back porch on occasion and shoot a sheep off the mountain above him, and it would roll right down to the porch. And also

at night they would not go out because of rattlesnakes. He'd sit in his front porch and shoot them in the daylight, you know, when it was still light going across the yard. So one time the area was really infested with snakes. The best snake story I ever heard, and it was not, it was a true story, and it didn't happen all that long ago. I suppose in fifty-three maybe, fifty-two, it would had to be later than that. I won't try to set the date, but there was a man named Hook's Fly, who has now passed on, he moved into the ranch house I lived in, Mrs. Fisher's house. And shortly after he'd moved in there, we had a storm one night here, and the lightning struck the place and went through the bedroom. Again, they moved on down the road and lived in a house down there very close to the wash. And Hook's was a rough and tough man. You'd have to know him. He was a gentleman. He loved horses, but Hook's was, I called, a rough man and he could swear like a stevedore and nothing much phased him. But this day he'd came into the station and he was still white and stuttering. Asked him what had happened, you know, what's wrong with you, Hook's? He said, "You're not going to believe this, but I got to tell you." Yesterday he had

been out on his tractor doing some work, come in for lunch, and he parked his tractor within just a short distance, maybe twenty-five or thirty feet of the back porch. He got off, went in the house, ate his lunch, and come back out to get on the tractor to start working. And he said, "of course, he wasn't looking at the ground. Now they lived very close to the wash. And so as he was about to take a step, he heard this buzz and he looked down, and he saw the largest snake he had ever seen in his life. And his description of it, it must have been twelve inches in its girth, coiled and round. It had crawled up there in between the time he had parked his tractor and gone in to eat. and when he came out. And he said he froze because he thought he was dead. And with his one foot in the air and the other on the ground he was afraid to move his eyeballs. And he said eventually the buzzing stopped, he settled down, and he very carefully moved his foot back. And he finally got back to where the snake couldn't hit him, and he screamed for his wife Florence. And Florence was also a person who didn't scare easily. And he yelled, "Florence," so loud that the man he worked for who was at least a half a mile down the road heard him yell and

knew that he had run into a snake. And Florence came running and with a shovel. And Hook's swung at the snake, hit it and cut it about half in two. And he said it reared up on its tail into the air and died, of course. But the thing about the story that impressed me so was that you have to remember the ground was sand. He buried the shovel so deep in the ground he had to take a spade to get it out. He couldn't pull it out. But that was a snake story of all snake stories in the desert that I'm aware of. But that was really something that happened. And I guess what I'm trying to say is that one time there was a lot of rattlesnakes in this area. Today I don't think there's any. You never see them.

After the rain there was no ... There was no damage really to speak of. But one particular morning that I'm aware of, it was the last week in July, I think, and the first couple of days in August, and if you'll check it out, that's when we had, we have had in the past and still have our storms here was in that particular time. Seems like the last two weeks of July and the first week of August is the time if we get a cloudburst or whatever. And this particular time, it had gone on for about two

weeks, just about like it is this morning. The sky was heavy, no rain but just, you couldn't believe the humidity and the buildup that was taking place. Finally on a Saturday morning about nine o'clock, nine-thirty, we heard this tremendous rumble back in the hills or the mountains. And that was rain that had happened up in the mountains and it was coming down the Magnesia Falls. And, of course, when it came across the road, it took out the road and I don't know how true this is, but they said, as I remembered, four inches of rain fell in forty minutes right here on the desert. And I believe it to this day if I'd just turned my head up like that for five seconds I would have drown. I never saw it rain so hard. And the water coming down out of the mountains combined was a sight I'll never forget. If that would happen today, with all the building that's up there, I don't think there would be a thing left standing. Couldn't withstand the force of . . . but thank heavens, I guess, those don't come too often. In fact, I have never seen it rain that hard. I've seen it rain like it is now for a long time, but with the intensity with which that came down, scary, just scared you to death. Place that we used to dump our garbage,

you know, we'd just go down San Jacinto Drive, walk off the street maybe three hundred feet and there would be a ravine there. You'd dump your garbare in there. There was no problem because the coyotes would take care of it. And I do remember this ravine that we were using to dump garbage in was maybe eight, ten feet deep. And after the rain, you'd look, and after the storm, you'd look down and I estimate it to be maybe thirty-five or forty feet deep, it had washed it out that badly. I've seen Bob Hope, I mean not Bob Hope, but Rio Del Sol where the crossing is of the wash there, I've seen it run full of water up to the banks clear to the top. Before the bridge was put in, it really wasn't much of a problem. It had these rains or storms, whatever, and maybe you couldn't get through there for a half a day or a day, it was cut off. But the water would very rapidly go down and the most damage would be a washout of the blacktop. The County would replace it within two or three days and you had an all-weather road again. All at once they came in there and put huge drainage pipes in and built it up about thirty feet probably, forty feet, and then the rains would come and it would wash all this out. Then you didn't have a road for two or three months. And finally they had built it

up quite high and we had one of these flash floods and it washed it out and we'd lost maybe, to this day, don't know how many people were drowned that drove off the end of that. And it was washed out. They had no way of knowing it, and they just dropped off into this raging torrent and were washed downstream. And as far as I know, and I'm sure I'm right, the bodies were never found. In fact, the vehicles were never found that they were in, which gives you an idea of the force of the water that could go through that wash. So we really lobbied for a bridge over Rio Del Sol. And maybe Amy told you this, but we did . . . I well remember the Chamber of Commerce was formed in Rancho Mirage in 1953 by Mr. Boyd Andrus. Mr. Andrus owned the Olympia Oyster House in Olympia, Washington and one way or another he was prevailed upon to open one down here so he built the oyster house. And it's still there, but now it's the Forest Hills Restaurant. Originally Mr. Andrus built that building and it was the Olympia Oyster House, our first restaurant, I think, also in Rancho Mirage. And he was a very civic-minded person, so the first thing was he decided that he would form a Chamber of Commerce, which he did. And our first members, as I

remember them, on the Board of Directors, Don Cameron, Ted Smith, my brother Richard and myself and I'm not going to try to remember anymore because I don't. But that was the first Chamber of Commerce effort in Rancho Mirage. And so it's gone on from then. Now it's become quite an active force at Rancho Mirage in the last couple of years. So we was having a meeting one morning at the Desert Air Hotel, and our meetings used to be well attended by the press. And this particular morning we'd had this meeting and it was the same week, I think, that this storm had taken place and life had been lost, and I was really upset about it because we had been trying to get a bridge over Rio Del Sol for a long, long time. And the stock answer was, well, we only have a storm once every twenty years that would be a big enough storm to cause enough damage to warrant a bridge. So Bill Cook was supervisor here at that time, and so anyhow, we had the meeting, this Chamber meeting, and I well remember, and I think Sid Greenleaf was our president at the time of the Chamber, and Sid said, is there anymore business. And I was rather insensed because Steve who was one of the victims had been a very good friend and a customer of mine. And I said, well, I don't know

whether anybody else is going to say anything or not, but I think the time has come that a bridge must be built on Rio Del Sol. And if we don't cause it to be built, then we are at fault. And there's got to be a way to do it. So I was, oh, I know, Gene Contrato at that time was putting out the Palm Desert Post, and gives you an idea how old the Post is, don't it? It's been around for quite awhile. And I said to Gene, I said, Gene, I said, why don't you people do something about it? And he said to me, he said, Les, I'm going to tell you something. We don't make the news. You make the news and we'll print it. And that means you have to, you people have to do it. So, by golly, we got busy and we got, called a couple of meetings with the County people and, of course, as normal they had no money. And it can't be done and so I think we enlisted at that time then Amy Croft in our campaign. And Amy was, at that time of course, and still is a very good friend of John Tunney. And she was able to get Tunney here and we met in Palm Springs and Tunney assured us that the Federal Government would be very happy to help us. All we had to do at that time then was to declare Bob Hope Drive a secondary road, and then we would be

eligible for Federal help. So this was our, what we had to do next. So we didn't think that would be too hard to do because at the time Rio Del Sol was becoming a road that was being used quite a bit more. And so we immediately went ahead and called a meeting down here and had Bill Cook here and some more of the County people. In fact, I still have letters that I've retained. And Bill called me aside prior to the meeting and he said, Les, I have news for you. This is already a Federal secondary road and we didn't know it. I said, well, great, then our problems are over. Well, he said, not quite. We'll explain. So during the meeting he said, well, now, the money that the Federal Government gives for this goes to the State. And then the State in turn funnels it down to the County. And then the County, of course, can do it. But sometimes this is a long procedure. Well, to make a long story short, we had the bridge, so I guess you know that some strings were pulled and things were done. And, of course, Amy had a lot to do with it. She was one of our people who went to bat, but nevertheless, we ended up by getting a bridge in. Of course, we almost didn't get it. The original people putting it in went bankrupt. They were

unfortunate enough to be hit with a bad storm during the construction of it which undermined it and almost took it out again. But nevertheless, we did have a bridge. We do have a bridge. One of the things that happened, when the bridge did become a reality, then everybody in the Valley who had a crossing problem immediately applied for the money that we were entitled to. I well remember Ray Sealey was running for County Supervisor for the first time when the money became available. Bill Cook was retiring and Ray was running for his seat. And one of the things we made Ray promise us so that we would support him in his run for the seat was that he would still be in our corner, that Bob Hope Drive would get the bridge. And, of course, it did. You also might be interested to know about the schoolhouse in Rancho Mirage, which was another Chamber accomplishment. The first time that we became cognizant here that we did need a school was back quite a few years ago, probably in the fifties. I don't remember the Palm Springs superintendent at the time, but the school district did own over five acres of ground right along the wash. There is now a village, Rancho Mirage Village, has built a condominium project in there, which is there

now, but at that time the school district owned this property. And had bought it, I don't know what time, to build a school on at some unspecified time in the future. And we thought the time had come that they should be considering it. So the superintendent came out. We met at the Desert Air Hotel. And as I remember, I'm trying to think if Jimmy Roosevelt attended that meeting. Maybe not, I don't think he did. But this school superintendent told us at that time. He said, now I'm going to tell you now there will never be a school built in Rancho Mirage. It's on the edge of the perimeter of our district and it does not make sense to build a school on a perimeter. It's much more reasonable that we will pick your people up and bus them in. Our children, I had a son at that time who was going to Coachella Valley High School, and even though we lived on Rio Del Sol in Fisher's farmhouse, we lived on the side of the road that was in Coachella Valley district. Had we lived on the other side of the road, we would have been in the Palm Springs district. He had to go to school at six thirty in the morning to get to Coachella High School by the time school started. Anyhow, I'm a little way from the subject. We were told that there

was no way a school could be built, and it really made sense, you know, that we were on . . . who's going to bring kids out to us? It's more feasible to send them in where there was a larger group of people, larger population. So we didn't pursue it for awhile and all at once one day we decided we were having two or three busloads of kids taken in every day. So again we started in a drive to have a school built in Rancho Mirage. It wasn't easy. I don't know how many meetings took place. They would not build on the wash area, so we had to find another area which would be suitable for the Board of Education to build a school on. And after possibly two years of just a tremendous amount of fighting we did get a school built in Rancho Mirage. And that was a Chamber, completely a Chamber, project. And those who pursued it very actively was Sid Greenleaf is one, Laddie Sabuda is another, and so that was the way the schoolhouse came into being in Rancho Mirage. Don Cameron, who is a legendary name, I don't know, you probably heard of Don Cameron. You never heard of him? It's a pity. Don came to Rancho Mirage, as far as I know, in about thirty-seven, 1937, when Rancho Mirage was originally laid out. The name of the original

developer escapes me for the moment. Nevertheless, Don came out to Rancho Mirage and worked for him. And as you'll well imagine, there wasn't a whole lot of sales in those days, but Don was a man, I'd say he's maybe six foot four, large man, and a real desert rat. And my first acquaintances with him was, of course, in 1951, and he was Mr. Rancho Mirage. He was the Major Domo here. Anything that happened, happened through Don. He knew everything that was going on. He wrote a column in the Desert Sun, which at that time was one issue a week. We could hardly wait for the Desert Sun to come. I don't know whether it was published on Tuesday or Thursday, but Don had a column in it every week. And he in 1952 or 1953, Sally O'Neal came to Rancho Mirage. Sally was a movie actress. Isabell Cameron's sister. Did you know Isabell, by any chance?

PY: Not that I know of.

LY: She was also, she only passed away a couple of years ago, but Isabell and Don were married then finally in the fifties and Sally came and was with Don. I can still see them. Don had a jeep, and he and Sally would drive down the highway there, and Don with his great big cowboy hat on and his boots and Sally with her black hair flying

out the back of her, off her head. And it was really a sight to behold. Those are things I think of in the past. Isabell lived until just very recently, very dear friend of mine. Very dear friend of mine. We have a property owners association in Rancho Mirage which had been there many times. I don't think I better put down here one of the scandals that happened at Rancho Mirage. I don't think that would be too nice to do because one of the participants is still living and I might have to prove it, and it would be awful hard to do at this late date. But there were things happening like all places, small towns, whatever, there's always a certain amount of hanky-panky goes on and it happened in Rancho Mirage. But nevertheless there was always a property owners association there, quite strong at times, quite weak at times. Finally in 1965 or 1966 it was taken back over by the people of Rancho Mirage. And I'm happy to say that it's still functioning. And even though it has become a city, the property owners association, in some cases there's more power than the city does and vice versa. I've since sold my property in Rancho Mirage, even though I still own a piece of property there. It's

hard to let loose, I lived there so many years. I know I've missed a lot of things. If you have any questions, I might be able to answer something for you.

PY: When Thunderbird was developed and you wanted to talk about that, too.

LY: I will. The first time I drove past Thunderbird was 1950. As you're aware, the Korean War was on. I was driving to Riverside on occasion. I used to do a lot of officiating in football and basketball when I lived in Ohio. So when I come out here, I thought, well, I'll, you know, that was my first love, athletics, so I thought, well, I will keep on with my officiating. And you had to go to school to be licensed, so I did go to school. But in going to Riverside, I drive and go by the back way here, had to drive past Thunderbird, which is now Thunderbird. At that time, of course, it was a ranch. And the first time I drove past it, I noticed all this pipe going on top of the ground. And I found out that it was used pipe, the water line that they was going to put in the golf course there, and this pipe was used pipe because the Korean War was on, they couldn't buy any pipe, so it was all old pipe that was put in. And, of course, I've seen the whole thing

happen then because we, in 1951, we moved to Rancho Mirage. And they were building Thunderbird at that time. And I saw it built. I'm trying to remember, I think originally maybe the lots in there sold for two thousand dollars, maybe up to four thousand dollars. And, of course, today I don't think there's any for sale at any price. And, of course, that was just a forerunner of the golf courses. Thunderbird, when it was completed, was a very, well, what happened, all of Jackie Cochran's people, she had a golf course, you know, in Indio, out on Monroe. Her golf course was there, Cochran Ranch they called it. And her people all deserted her and went over here, of course, to Thunderbird. And I well remember this. She was so mad. She said anybody who lived in the desert, which meant people like myself, could play any time in her golf course for two dollars. We could go over there and play all day for two dollars on Jackie's course. We could go to Adonnell's and play for five dollars in those days. Then Tamarsk was built. My understanding is that the Jewish people and the people who built Thunderbird decided that they would have a parting of ways. So the Jewish people decided they'd build their own golf course, which they

did. Believe me, they built a beautiful thing at Tamarsk. And the public could go in there and play, which I did many times. I never was able to play on Thunderbird. That was exclusive from day one. And Gresham, then they just popped up everywhere, you know, golf courses. And if you want my opinion, they should have stopped building them five years ago and never let another one be built. They're using my water every day to water them. Millions and millions of gallons of water's wasted, wasted, wasted every day. It's not wasted; it's keeping grass green, but it's also keeping our skies full of clouds. Believe it or not, when we first came to the desert, you never saw a cloud in the sky. They would come up to the Santa Rosa's back here and lay along the edge. They would never come over the mountains into the valley. Our sky was as blue as anything you ever seen. The only time we had humidity and clouds was in September from about the first week or the last week of August to the middle of September, we had terrible humidity. Sometimes it would even last a little longer than the middle of September. We would have terrible, terrible humidity. And that would be, then a big wind would come. We'd have a big blow going.

It would blow out the humidity, and winter was here. And our seasons were so much different. It got hot here in March, latter part of February, over a hundred degrees. We had hot weather. And the first day I came to the valley, June 15 of 1950, was a hundred and twenty-seven that day we pulled into Indio. And on the same year on Labor Day was a hundred and twenty-nine or thirty. And that was before the days of air conditioning. We just had the coolers. So I think you can see from that our weather is changing. In some respects, I suppose, for the better because we don't have near the hot weather we used to have. Now, you know, we only have hot weather, what, a couple of months, really, two and a half months. And it's changing. We used to have, our winds were much heavier. They blew longer earlier and heavier. That had changed. And as you can see, our skies are not blue anymore. Do you have any other questions that you'd like to . . .

PY: I'm just curious if the, I was curious if the country clubs themselves have changed the type of living that's in Rancho Mirage, brought in a different kind of group of people.

LY: Well, certainly. The people live at the clubs are those

who either second homes or have retired at the clubs.

One thing I've noticed, I think, and, of course, observation only because I've never lived in one, more and more people are, well, I'll tell you, when I came here in 1951 or 1950, not much difference, on Easter Sunday was the last day. The next day everybody had left.

Every place was practically closed up. It was almost impossible to find a restaurant. Those who stayed here, they used to joke about them and say, they just didn't have enough money to leave. Anybody who had enough money left. And were gone until Thanksgiving was really the next time you'd expect people. And then what really ended it all was when school was out. Those few who'd stayed after Easter, when school was out, really did take off. So you can imagine in June, July and August, there was, this was the most deserted place you ever seen. And to be caught here was, I guess, was sort of a stigma. You couldn't afford, you couldn't get out, you had no place to go or something to that effect. And if I see any change now at all, of course, it's the fact people don't leave anymore. Or if they do, they come back so quickly. They find out that with their air conditioning all that's made it very possible to live here. And

speaking for myself, my wife will tell you the same thing, we go away, we can't wait to come home. Or at least, speaking for myself, I can't, and she says that it effects her the same way. And goes the old axium is, there's no place like home. I came from Findlay, Ohio, and there's no way I could live there again. We go back to visit and I can't wait to leave. My son lives in San Francisco. We go up there to visit, I can't wait to get home. I freeze to death. No matter what, there's a reason why we have to get home. I find that to be true in the country clubs. The living has changed there considerably. Our big problem is that, of course, I think, is the help situation here. Getting into the modern times now, there's no place for people to live on middle income, low income. It's just impossible to find a place. Property is so expensive that they can't afford to build low-income housing on it because they can't get enough rent. I don't know what the answer is. Oh, I do know what it is. It will have to be that way. It will be subsidized one of these days by the government like everything else. What else?

PY: My goodness!

JY: In my business, the secretarial service, I had clientele

all over the world including, I'm thinking of
so I don't know what but I was mentioning having had a secretarial service here since 1957.
I came in contact with people who had traveled over the world. And especially one gentleman who brought in sandpiper, had traveled and lived all over the world. Our correspondence with the kings, queens, heads of state, wherever. And they settled here because this to them was the most ideal spot. They had come here from Clairemont, but even in the summertime they, if they left, it was for a very short period of time.

LY: I have something that I could tell you. As you know, I'm sure you're aware that one of the homes in Rancho Mirage, one of the oldest homes in Rancho Mirage, was built by Fred, not Fred but what's Morgan?

PY: Frank Morgan.

LY: Frank Morgan's home. And this is sort of a little aside and doesn't mean anything, but after my wife and I had taken over the restaurant and station, there was a gentleman that came in quite often. And I asked him several times and, I said, you know, about him and he would talk. You could tell he was a very well educated man. And sort of a mystery man. So one day I asked

Jack Nathenson, I said, Jack, I said, do you know this fellow? And he said, Yes. He said, I'll tell you something that don't let on like I told you. I said, well, that's fine. I won't say anything. He said, well, he's really a Catholic priest and he's out here incognito. He's a chaplain at St. John's Hospital and he comes down and Mrs. Morgan, Frank Morgan's widow, lets him stay at this house. And he has arthritis so badly that when he comes in, his hands are so gnarled, he can't even put them in his pocket. And he goes out here on the desert and he digs a hole in the sand, big enough to get his body in, takes off all his clothes, sits down and pulls the sand in around him so it's like a sand pack, hot sand pack. Within two or three days he's, everything is fine and he's okay. So he would keep coming in and after I found this out I kept trying to figure out ways that I could get him to tell me who he was. So finally one day I said, Look, I said, you know, we talk a lot back and forth and so forth, but, I said, what's your name? I said, I got to call you something. I said, I consider you a friend. And he said, well, call me Bert. He said, my name's Bert. So, okay, Bert. So I'm laughing to myself all

the time because I know Bert is a priest. So one day he's going to go back in to Santa Monica to St. John's. And it was a Friday morning, it was a Friday, and he come in and he ordered bacon and eggs. And so I sit there and I know Catholics don't eat meat on Fridays. So I said to him, I said, aren't you Catholic? He said, yes. And I said, well, you're ordering meat on Friday. He said, well, Les, he said, I'll tell you what, he says, you know, I'm going to be traveling today and there is a place where it says I can, you know, I need all the strength I can get. And he said, so therefore, he said, I can have some meat. And I kind of laughed and he said, look, he said, I'm going to tell you something. He said, I'm really a Catholic priest. And he said, I'm here incognito because I don't want anybody to know me. I said, well, I'm going to tell you something, Bert. I've known it a long time. I just wanted you to admit it. So we became very friendly. He drives an old beat-up car and every time he comes out he always wants to stay longer because they only give him so much time. I've had him come into my station and call the superior mother at the hospital and ask for more time. And occasionally she would grant it, and occasionally

she wouldn't. But as I became better acquainted with him, I found out that he knew many, many famous people. Bing Crosby and a lot of them that we'd all ever just hear about and read about. And one day he told me, he said, you know, Les, he said, Vincent H. Flaherty wrote a column at that time in the Los Angeles Times, probably one of the most famous sportswriters of all times. And he told me about how well he knew him. He told me about knowing Jack Dempsey and, oh, my goodness, he knew everybody that I had ever heard of. And I thought, well, now here's a Catholic priest that could be stretching the truth a little bit. Told me how he'd written a children's book, become a best seller. How his paintings he had painted, many paintings and he had exhibits and so forth. So I am putting all this back here in the back burner because I thought Bert had gotten carried away a little bit. Now then, the kicker is, one morning I pick up the newspaper and I'm reading Vincent H. Flaherty's column. There had been a big party and all these sports names that I had heard Father Rogers speak of are mentioned. And who do you think was there as a speaker? Father Rogers. Well, that wasn't enough. Sometime later I picked up the Herald Express one evening and they had

a second front page in there as most newspapers do. And there was a large layout of paintings. And it told all about this beautiful exhibit by this artist who was Father Rogers. And the man was exactly what he said he was, he did what he said he had done, and was probably one, as I look back over my life, my only regret is I didn't become better acquainted with Father Rogers. One of the greatest persons, one of the most unassuming men that I ever met in my life, just as common as an old shoe, would sit there, I had my work clothes on. He'd have on a pair of trousers, an old shirt or sweater, a pair of sneakers. And here was a man of the world sitting down with me, and anybody else who wanted to listen, and recount these things. Really, I was trying to remember as we was talking here the last time I seen Father Rogers, and it's been some time ago. I would wonder if he's passed away. If he had, you'd have thought it would have made the newspapers simply because he was such a well-known man. So these are some of the fortunate things that, some of the things that stay with you all of your life, you know. And in the station business, I might as well go on and tell you that I have probably waited on practically everybody

that you've ever heard of in the movie industry, the TV industry and the famous, the near-famous and those who weren't so famous. My wife can tell you more about those people because she has worked for General Eisenhower and quite a few people that's pretty well known.

PY: Where did you open your business?

JY: I'll tell you about that in a minute. First of all I wanted to comment about Les' narration on Father Rogers. I think that points out the mode of living, the ease of living the desert dwellers had at that time. And when my late husband and I had been here about a year or so, we had the annual cleanup drive. And, of course, the men were all enlisted to have various spots that they, we didn't have the, now we have the disposal companies do a lot of it. But at that point we had trucks and the men were lifting and doing this and that and the other thing. And my husband came home and told me about this really nice man that he'd worked with and described, and I said, oh, that was, can't think what his name was now, Bower, Mr. Bower, lived right down the street here. He said, well, who's he? And I said, he's an oil millionaire. Oil millionaire! He's dressed in

blue jeans and a ragged shirt. So this was the mode of living in those days. And I think maybe our country clubs have, well, they're more sophisticated now perhaps. But back to my story, my late husband and I came here in February of 1954. And I didn't realize until Les said the Thunderbird was built in 1951 that that had to be one of the first tournaments. We attended golf tournaments at Thunderbird that year. We were living in Sacramento and came down here to escape the rain. Kind of funny, isn't it? Then moved down here. We were in Palm Springs for a few months and at that time the El Mirador Hotel was in the transitional stage. The Chicago Transit Company was purchasing it. And Dick Vandevere had been brought up to Chicago to "straighten up the accounts and so forth." So I worked there for several months until they got, the hotel had already closed for the season. I worked there until they got everything straightened out. Then we had moved to Palm Desert, bought our first home out here. And there was an architect here by the name of Walter White who was doing some very modern things. People thought he was a little way out, remember?

LY: Yes.

JY: He was a marvelous architect. I think he's now moved to

Denver. He was before his time.

LY: I should tell you something about him sometime. He wasn't so marvelous.

JY: (laughter) He was ahead of his time in design, though. Anyway, I did a lot of work for him. There really wasn't anyone, I think there were two hundred people in Palm Desert at that time, not very many.

LY: That would be a maximum.

JY: Right. Maybe a hundred and ninety-seven, something like that. People in Palm Desert at that time. So the few businesses were the real estate offices, the bank was a little cubby hole in the Desert Magazine building. And drugstore.

LY: What was the manager's name? Mike what?

JY: Mike Monay.

LY: Monay.

JY: Mike Monay. And he had the title of assistant cashier. So you can see we didn't have that many funds yet at that time. The lumber yard was here. And I was wondering if you had spoken with the Ekerts. What was Lorene's husband's name?

LY: Well, let's carry on and I'll think.

JY: Anyway, the lumber yard was here and I can't remember

Mrs. Ekert's first name, but, I mean, name by her husband that owned it. We had an old gentleman by the name of Mike Delaney who had a fish shack, remember that, down on Highway 111?

LY: Yes, that's where Oliver went in with those Mexicans.

JY: Right. And then our post office was a little sort of adobe building about where the Market Basket Center is now. And I remember there were so few boxes that we shared a box with somebody for awhile. I mean, we let them use our box. We, and that was Bill Meyers running that for something like fifty dollars a month, wasn't it? He was a VA, I mean he was a veteran who had been shot quite badly. The big thing in Palm Desert was the Shadow Mountain Club. And most people, we did not belong to Shadow Mountain Club, but that was the entertainment and they would have, oh, Sunday night movies. At different times they would open it to the public. People who were not members. But . . .

Okay. One of the evening's entertainment was a drive up to Shadow Mountain Club and park there and see all the rabbits out on the lawn. And, of course, at that same time when we would be driving home in the evening

as we would leave the Highway 111 to turn up our street there would probably be rabbits playing in the street. Something we hardly ever see now. And, of course, the snakes and lizards as Les has already told you. Anyway, after we had been in Palm Desert for a couple of months, our next door neighbor, who was Bob Coats who was selling real estate under Edith Eddy Ward at that time, had learned that they needed a secretary at what was then known as Palm Desert Corporation. And the Palm Desert Corporation was the company which Cliff Henderson headed for the development of x number of acres, not the entire community was owned by him, but portions of it. So I then became the secretary at that office. I think there was one other secretary in town at that time. I think that was Jeannie Aarons who worked at our sales office. Then two and a half years after I became associated with the PDC, the Aamonson group came in and purchased the remaining assets. By that time I realized because different people, Harry Holt who was an insurance man at that time, oh, I can't tell you any number of men would come in and want a letter written. I had an old clunk of a typewriter at home, so I would say, well,

write it out, I'll take it home and do it up at home.

So I realized there was a need for a secretarial service.

Also Mr. Henderson had personal work that he would want

done. So I first opened my office in the area that

Air Lancy just vacated. I don't know what's there now.

Are they tearing that down?

LY: They're going to.

JY: Yes. I first opened up a small office there in conjunction

with, oh, I'm trying to think. No, I was in that office

alone at that time. And it was about that time that

a young architect by the name of John Alcott came to

town and he could not afford a secretary. So Al Capp

brought him in and I did his secretarial work. I've

moved a couple of times during the interim and

eventually the Palm Desert Board of Realtors enlarged

to the point where they felt they needed someone to

attend their meetings and take accurate notes of their

meetings and send out their mailings and so forth. Then

eventually I took on the secretarial work for the Rotary

Club which is also another big job. These were jobs

that I had the year round as well as some of these small

businessmen who were in insurance and real estate and so

forth. Then the country clubs began to get more and more

popular. And people from the east, people from the north-

west, the Canadians and so forth started going in. And they then formed the nucleus of the business. And it's remained pretty much that way ever since. Thank goodness, it used to slow down in the summertime, but now recent years you never know when the season starts or stops because so many people are staying here the year round. What else? Oh, I might say, too, that I did, when I first opened my office I did a lot of volunteer work for the Chamber of Commerce. And then when they decided they needed a part-time manager, Lou Keener, I think, was our very first part-time manager. And I did some work for him. And this was something I did for a number of years. And one thing that was very interesting, we're still fighting the same battles, when I was at the Palm Desert Corporation, we had the battles of the dogs that were not controlled which today is a terrible problem. We had the battles of the Frontage Road that's still being fought. And the gentleman who was in an administrative capacity at the Palm Desert Corporation was Lee Oddle. And he came through here some years ago, and he had picked up a newspaper and he laughed. He said, they're still fighting the same battles. Even though he'd been gone twenty years. And

another battle we'd fought twenty years or more is the Palm Desert High School. I can't tell you how many times the Board would come out from Indio. We would hear their speeches about if you vote this bond issue in, we'll put a high school in Palm Desert. We voted it in, the high school always went someplace else to the point where I don't know whether any Palm Desert people will ever vote a bond issue because they know that the high school's going to be built in the other end of the valley. Another problem you probably have heard about is the problems we had in connection with forming the library. Has Hal told you about that?

PY: No, he hasn't been around.

JY: Oh. Well, Hal Capp and several other civic minded people decided we should have our own library here because it was some distance to go either to Palm Springs or Indio. We tried to get it on the ballot and had it gone on the ballot, it would have cost each homeowner something like sixteen dollars a year in their taxes. Many of the homeowners, even those with four children, friends of ours, we just couldn't believe it, voted it down. So a group of about eight or ten businessmen underwrote a loan and then spearheaded a drive and the library was

built entirely with private funds. And, of course, Randall Henderson donated the land. Many people donated thousands of dollars. Others hundreds of dollars. And the library is a community library for that reason.

LY: Was it given to the county then?

JY: I think later it was, it's under county jurisdiction, but I don't know if it was given to them. I think it still, doesn't it still say community library? I think it's property of Palm Desert. I think it is. The church, has anyone told you about the Palm Desert Church, how that was . . . oh. Gee, I wish I had all, I think I've given Hal, and you probably have them someplace in the file, the papers on the original Palm Desert Church. Dr. McCartney came down and they had church on horseback at the Palm Desert Stables, Shadow Mountain Stables.

LY: Didn't they originally have it down there?

JY: Over there.

LY: And there was an area between Rancho Mirage and Palm Desert . . .

JY: Where that bridge is.

LY: Where the bridge is now, there used to be a, oh, stables . . .

JY: A school.

LY: And a room where you could meet, and people rode out of there until . . . and the road used to run around where Painter's Path is now. And the highway used to run around the foot of those hills. And . . .

JY: Well, it was when Ahmanson bought, I think, that the stables were removed.

LY: Well, then when they cut the road straight through, that's when the stables were out.

JY: That's true.

LY: But until that time, as you say, that was where the . . .

JY: That was our church. Then they had a new piece of people who gathered together enough money, and Cliff Henderson gave them that site on Portola where the Mentally Retarded Foundation is now. And money was raised to build that church. Then in, well, it wasn't too many years later that the church outgrew that small building. I mean, the membership, and they built a sort of a lean-to awning on the north side which was all right when the weather was good, but when it was hot, it was very hot to sit out there for a church service. Then that was, at that time they saw the need to build a new church. And the church on Highway 74 was built at that time. I have pictures of that showing those two big

what do you call those two big columns going up. They had to, they're so heavy that they had to bring cranes down from, I think it was Los Angeles, cranes which had to be disassembled to bring them down the highway. They were so large, to lift up those huge concrete . . .

LY: Valves, you call them concrete valves.

JY: Valves. You know, that hold up the church at the far end. They were poured on the ground.

LY: I think they were one of the first . . . when they first started pouring cement on the ground and then putting it in place.

JY: Yes.

LY: I think that was one of the first ones.

JY: And it took them all day to get their cranes assembled. Then it took, I don't know, it took, I guess, most of the day to get the first panel up. Then after it got the first one up, they could realize easier how to get the second one up. And that was done in July. I have pictures of Dean Miller with my husband went up there with a towel in his car and the sweat was just pouring off. So here's Dean Miller with this towel around his head like an Arab. (laughter) Kind of funny. But we've seen many changes, I guess. I'm trying to think of something else that's gone on. I guess now, like I say,

the population has increased. When Ben and I first drove in to Palm Desert to see this little house, he had seen it before, I had not, we pulled into a service station. And I never will forget one of the oldtimers, it was probably Dudley Steeles, as I think back, was complaining because all these people are coming into the desert. It's just getting too big and I think I'll move. I wonder what that man would say now when he sees all the (laughter) And we're getting about the same way. We're very grateful that Phil Boyd and a few others had the foresight to put aside the acreage for the Living Desert because people love the desert. They move here. The first thing they do is put in grass, so it's no longer a desert. You don't have any grass. Right?

LY: I like grass. I'm from Ohio.

JY: (laughter) Move to Ohio.

LY: I used to know everyone in Rancho Mirage. Today I go down there, I probably see twenty-five people, I'm lucky to know one of them. That is one of the negatives of the growth.

JY: That's true. The post office in those days was the social center, and it was fun. About nine thirty or ten,

everyone would go to the post office. And then you would visit and you would see everyone that you knew. And you knew everybody you saw. But now it's very different.

LY: Rancho Mirage's original post office was located where Trivia and Treasures are today.

JY: That's right.

LY: It was a very small building with a thatched roof on it, as I remember. The office itself couldn't have been, where you went in, couldn't have been over eight by eight. And Sid and Laura worked in it, and then occasionally they'd hire Mrs. Campbell, Betty Campbell.

JY: Yes.

LY: Belle. And at the post office on the side was a thatched roof which was interesting. I forgot it. Sid was a fire chief at Rancho Mirage. I was assistant fire chief. We had a truck, a Dodge truck, with a pumper on it. It wasn't very big, but it was a fire department, so I'd get that out every once in awhile and drive it up and down the highway, you know, keep the battery up and check it out. But we had a fire department in Rancho Mirage in 1951.

JY: That's more than you have now. (laughter)

LY: Well, we had some volunteers in those days, and I think

went out on a couple of occasions. Probably didn't do any good, but we had a fire department. But I remember I had a badge with assistant fire chief on it. And Sid was the fire chief. So, you know, that's just a little aside. And we had no fancy building. It was just in a, in fact, remember how they used to put the . . .

JY: Palm fronds.

LY: Palm fronds, I guess.

JY: To keep it cool, I think.

LY: No, it was like brush or cattails and it was wired.

JY: Oh.

LY: And it was shade, but it was also a tremendous fire hazard. My golly, you know, somebody just throw a match or cigarette and it would be like that. But I almost forgot that I was an assistant fire chief at one time in Rancho Mirage.

PY: When was the opening of the Shadow Mountain Club?

LY: The night they had the opening, it was not completely completed. It was in a, well, wasn't all together, but their big claim to fame was a pool. That pool at Shadow Mountain Club was known, I think, all over California or Southern California. It was really, I guess, a super thing. And there was a large crowd of

people for the desert. It was a big crowd of people. And there were celebrities here, of course, because Cliff was so well known. Cliff Henderson was the one who built it and he was so well known. And, of course, at that time they didn't have tennis courts, did they? All they offered was just a clubhouse.

JY: Well, the tennis court came soon if they weren't erected then because tennis was his big game.

LY: That was his big game.

JY: And always has been.

LY: And I think they came very quickly after the opening of the club.

JY: But you see, a lot of those movie stars also had stock in that.

LY: Yes.

JY: In the Palm Desert Corporation.

LY: But one of the things that is very interesting, it's my understanding, I wasn't exactly privy to it, but who was the singer who was turned down in a place because he was black at Rancho Mirage that died of lung cancer?

JY: Oh, we talked about that not too long ago. Who was that?

LY: Nat King Cole was turned down because he was black. He

couldn't buy a house in Rancho Mirage. Maybe I shouldn't say this, but it's the truth. A Jewish person couldn't belong to Shadow Mountain Club.

JY: That's right.

LY: If you were the . . .

JY: Or buy here, really.

LY: Or buy a place in Palm Desert, was not allowed. And as I say, I don't know for sure about these things, but I'm positive it happened because it was a well-known thing and it was a subject that was talked about a lot. But I have heard that actresses, well-known people, were turned away from Shadow Mountain Club because, simply because they were Jewish. Now that might be, I don't know, but . . .

JY: That's probably true.

LY: But such a short time ago, racism, all that, was so much in effect, it's almost unbelievable, you see. And I suppose every community had it then to some extent.

JY: Oh, yes.

LY: These are things that have all had to change. That couldn't last, you see. I only mentioned it because I never could quite get over the fact that Nat King Cole was denied a place to live because he wanted to move

to the desert. We had some rather famous people here. Jimmy Roosevelt lived there and owned a home there until just a short time ago; maybe he still owns it, I don't know. I think he probably sold it. And the one actor, what was his name, that used to, died from a back operation, lived there. Now the Whispering Waters Hotel has quite a history to it. That was built by a Dr. Johnson originally, and it looked like, you know, it would be the place in the desert. But it didn't go. And as I remember he sold it to a group of actors and actresses, Lloyd Bridges being one. Oh, Hugh O'Brien and there was about five or six of them that were really well up in and they owned it. And I know when they opened, they brought down Jayne Mansfield as an attraction. And anybody, those people who attended could get their picture taken with her, you know. And believe me, there was a lot of people took advantage of that. But then after a time, I don't know, six or seven weeks, they gave up, they couldn't make it. And then, was it Uncle Bernie bought it or was it Johnny Bash? Johnny Bash . . .

JY: I didn't know Johnny Bash had it, but I know that Uncle Bernie business. I remember when he . . .

LY: Well, then maybe Johnny Bash had it then. Him and Gloria went in there. And then they made, if anybody ever made a success out of it, they did. They made some money, but they finally got out of it and built the place in Palm Desert. So I think Uncle Bernie was the head of them. And he was a magician so called, an entertainer, entertained children and so forth. But then since then, it's going into progressive sales and down, down, down. And today I'm not even sure who owns it or whether it has any value to it at all except for the property it sits under. But that was a place that was touted to be at one time the place on the desert and it was beautiful. Why it never went, I don't know. I just don't know. They did everything there. They had music, they had good restaurants in there, they just did everything to make that place go, but it never caught on.

JY: I was going to go back to Shadow Mountain, but did you have a question about that? We were speaking of Shadow Mountain, and of course you probably heard that it was supposed to be a family club. And they did have a lot of things for children, a lot of activities. You see, when we first came here, there were so few children in this area and like the little children on our block, they

had nobody to play with so they'd come to our house and play with me. (laughter) But they had at Shadow Mountain Club for the children. And one of the big gatherings would be on Fourth of July, they'd have an all-day picnic for the families and so forth. And when Lou Keener was working part-time at the Chamber of Commerce, we started what we called the Fun Fair on the Fourth of July because not everybody could go out of town, especially families. And it was open then, at that time Shadow Mountain Club was open to people from the surrounding communities. And that was quite a big event. And from that evolved then later on Helma Lawrence took it over and he had her Christmas in July at Fire Cliff Lodge. And then the parade that they have had the last few years. I think now they've discontinued but Shadow Mountain Club was the center of attraction and was especially slated for children, more so than now the private clubs are more adult activities, which is too bad.

PY: What was it you were talking about this Christmas in July and the Fun Fair. What were they?

JY: Well, it was like the Fun Fair, it was just a big Fourth of July celebration. But then I don't really know why

Helma Lawrence took it over except that she saw it was a good idea to break a lot of people. You see, the Fire Cliff Lodge, she was running it, the dining and the motels. So she would advertise this Christmas in July and people, maybe people would come down to the desert and see what was going on. And there would be parades and music and so on and so forth.

LY: That was just abandoned here in the last few years.

I think the final thing that did it was they brought a band in here from Long Beach or one of the coast cities, you know. And they came in with their heavy uniforms on July the Fourth.

JY: And just collapsed.

LY: And mothers were running along beside them spraying water on their faces and kids were falling like flies, you know. But, boy, they had a big attendance up at Shadow Mountain Club.

JY: Oh, we used to have a lot of fun there.

LY: Hundreds of people would turn out, you know. And it was always a big thing. But that only was abandoned just what . . .

JY: Just a couple, yes, about three or four years ago.

LY: Three or four years ago. So it was . . .

JY: Well, it really, Fourth of July really is awfully hot.

Then if the people came unprepared for the summer weather, it was pretty bad.

LY: People coming in from the outside certainly didn't know.

They didn't realize how hot hot is.

JY: Another thing is, I was wondering, of course, I don't

know how far you're going, if you're going into La Quinta, but did you know that quite a bit of The Road was shot in La Quinta?

PY: No.

JY: What are some of the other movies that were made there?

Did they make . . .

LY: The Silver Chalice was made here in Palm Desert, Rancho Mirage.

JY: Well, and the Mad, Mad World was made just up the road here on 74, and that was, oh, that was a lot of fun because they had, their service station was built, was just before you get to the wash, as you're going up Highway 74. And it was so realistic that people would pull in and be irate, they couldn't get gasoline. And, of course, in the scene in the movie, that was destroyed four times, I think, before they got the shot the way they wanted it. But that was a lot of fun. They had a

huge tent in the wash where they had their commissary and fed their people. Really, I can't remember where they housed them. Did they take them into Palm Springs to house them?

LY: Yes.

JY: Because we didn't have too much in the way of hotel facilities at that time.

PY: When was this?

JY: That was, oh . . .

LY: Fifties, I think, late fifties or early sixties.

JY: It was a long time ago.

LY: Yes.

JY: Probably early sixties.

LY: Whenever the Mad, Mad World was made.

JY: Well, when was Cinerama? It was at the height of Cinerama.

PY: That was like 1961.

LY: It had to be in that area.

JY: Yes, because it was then.

LY: They used the Desert Air for a lot of that, too.

JY: Yes.

LY: Bob Hope Drive, or at that time, Rio Del Sol Road.

JY: Yes, but that was very interesting because people would

go into that service station and not realize it was part of the movie set. But the desert area has been used for quite a few movies, some of which haven't been publicized very much because they're shooting the Sahara Desert or something like that, but actually they're shooting it here.

LY: The Silver Chalice was quite a bit movie. And that was just right outside of that town.

PY: I was going to ask you about the Adobe Gardens. When that came about.

LY: The Adobe Gardens.

JY: Yes, that was built, was that the second hotel built? Fire Cliff was the first one. Then I think the Adobe followed and it was just the adobe cottages. Then the other portion, concrete block portion, was added about twenty years ago. But now was that built by Harold Smith or was it built by somebody else?

LY: Somebody else built it, but Harold bought it.

JY: Harold Smith, who's a Canadian, spent a great deal of time here. And bought it. He still lives here. And they operated it for quite awhile.

LY: Well, he gave it to his daughter, you know, Marilyn.

JY: Yes, but they sold it since. It's been sold twice.

LY: That's right.

JY: Then another one of the older, was a hotel unit, was Twin Palms. It's now been converted into either condos or apartments, I don't know which. Bob Stergeon run that.

LY: This might be interesting. Where Mario's is today, when we came to Rancho Mirage, that was a motel. And there might have been two motels there at that time, but people by the name of Mosleys moved in and it was really a modern place. And you couldn't get a room there, you know, they were really taken. But now I see Mario's sitting there. And some of the old motels, I noticed the other night when I was there, some of the walls are, they didn't tear everything quite down. But that was back, that was built probably in 1948 or 1949. And I would also, maybe you don't, but the history of Rio Del Sol Road, which is now Bob Hope, wasn't always there. Harry . . .

JY: Carrion?

LY: No. You know, Harry Oliver.

JY: Oh, yes.

LY: Harry Oliver and Don Cameron realized at one time that that was the ideal place for a road to come into Rancho Mirage. Of course, Harry lived at Thousand Palms. He

had his work there. And so they prevailed upon the County, and the original Bob Hope Drive, the original Rio Del Sol Road, was just a path through the sand. There was no road per se. I guess, and it was passable. That was about all you could say for it. And they stayed with it. Now when we came in fifty, it had been blacktopped, very narrow, just wide enough for a few cars to barely pass on it. And since that time, it's been rebuilt twice, I think. Part over the hospital even more, but I'm thinking of past the hospital towards the highway. It's been rebuilt that I am aware of two more times, widened each time. And at one time they raised it and lowered it. It used to be a sort of a series of dips down through there which is very dangerous. And so they at one time then went ahead and made it pretty level all the way. Took the dips out and crowns and made it flat. But that was due to Harry Oliver and Don Cameron's foresight that Rio Del Sol Road was put in there. Probably would have been eventually, but they seen the need for it back in the forties. And had it done.

PY: Well, then that was already done by the time

JY: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

LY: The story is, and maybe you're aware of it, why he built that.

PY:

LY: The story is that the reason that he built that golf course, he belonged to Tamarsk originally. He went out one morning to get a starting time and to his dismay there was none. He became a little irate, said okay, I'll build my own. And so you see the result. He has his own golf course. I'm sure that's true. It seemed to be the general opinion of everybody that's the reason was built. Now on a personal, you see, on a personal aside, that to me, believe me, I'm not communist, I'm not facist, I'm not anything except what I am, but you see, the man's using my water to keep it the way it is. And I don't like that. You know, you realize how many people . . .

JY: (laughter) Okay. I think I have the location. It's the Hopalong Cassidy house. You go down Burroway to, I think it's Joshua, the street deadends right about there. Everything Hopalong had was painted black and white.

LY: Was white with a black trim, wasn't it?

JY: Right. No, it was black with white trim.

LY: Oh, yes.

JY: Yes. And this house was a one-bedroom house. And the swimming pool was an indoor-outdoor, and I remember they had a one-bedroom house because they weren't here that much and they wanted to be alone when they were here. Back to this black and white. You see, he always wore a black cowboy outfit with the white hat. And remember seeing him in Ed Mullen's drugstore when it was just a small one?

LY: The clerks hated him.

JY: Oh, really. Well, I don't know about that. But anyway, whenever he would see little kids, he had these little Hoppy coins, about the size of a, oh, fifty-cent piece, I guess. And Hopalong was on one side and on the other side it had some printing of some kind. But he would give those to the little kids. And then at Christmas-time, he would, as long as his horse was capable of it, he would usually bring the horse, Trigger? up to Shadow Mountain Club, and then he would give these kids these coins and the Chamber of Commerce would have things arranged. But I can't tell you how many times he did that, but I know he used to do that. Then the horse

wasn't that well anymore. And, of course, Hoppy was declining, too, so that was discontinued. But he always had those Hoppy coins and that was lots of fun for the kids. I know I got them for Virginia Lee's kids whenever he would . . .

LY: Did you talk to Ed Mullen?

PY: Can't get ahold of him.

JY: Isn't that awful? Ed could tell you stories. Of course, you asked about my office and Les mentioned I had a lot of people come in. One time we had, when we'd come in, and I didn't recognize the name when he called and I didn't work with her, my sister did, but after she left the lady who did the work came in and said, that was Jeannette MacDonald.

PY: Oh!

JY: And, oh, we had many, many still some of them still come into the office. One, Freeman Garston was a regular client for many, many years. And what was the man, oh, he was an intelligent guy, he lived out on Indian Wells. Oh, I don't know, but many of them. And Ray Bolger has been in the office, very British. Looks just like he does on TV. But it's interesting. They all have, they're all just as human as anybody else.

LY: Down here my version of your famous people, of your stars or whatever, down here they're a different breed.

JY: That's right.

LY: When they come in, they're friendly. You don't bother them. The only person that ever impressed me was General Eisenhower. I'll tell you right now. He was the only person that I felt in awe of when he came in. All the rest of them were just something. They was no different than you or whatever. But General Eisenhower could make you feel you were in the presence of someone who had been somebody. And, of course, was. I'm racking my brain here.

JY: I am, too. I haven't been really thinking like I should have been when I knew Pat was coming. We went through Les' old photographs. He'd thrown so many of them away they didn't mean too much, and I don't know where mine are, so that wouldn't help any. Oh, in fact, I wondered, Pat, I have my old Soroptimist scrapbook. Would you want anything out of that?

PY: I don't know. Let's look.

JY: Like the beginning of the . . .

LY: It's in there.

JY: Oh, yes. Yes.

PY: Was it a delicatessen?

JY: No.

LY: No.

JY: An old-fashioned drugstore with the counters like a soda, you're too young, you don't remember, a counter here and then stools. And they'd serve sandwiches and ice cream sodas.

LY: Coffee and they had a big business. Well, Katie then bought him out, so you know Katie's been in a long time, too.

JY: But that's a new addition.

PY: Now where is that?

JY: Well, you know where Katie has his restaurant? Okay, in that center where Ed Lancey used to be, okay, it's that building in front of there.

PY: That's in the old Bank of America.

JY: A block west.

LY: There used to be a Standard Station on the corner, but you probably don't remember that either. Bert Emery had it.

JY: That's been gone for five or six years. Oh, longer than that, ten years maybe.

LY: Probably.

PY: Did you have a station in Rancho Mirage before there was one in Palm Desert?

LY: No, Art Fields had a station here in Palm Desert. I think Art was the first one, wasn't he that had the station in . . .

JY: The Texaco station?

LY: The Texaco station. Art put that in probably before 1950. And then I had a or Jack Nattenson built that one in Rancho Mirage. Maybe they built them about the same time. And then, if memory serves me right, well, Richfield built that station on the corner there in Rancho Mirage. They had a stockholder, Jeff, can't remember Jeff's last name, but anyhow, they, Richfield built one there because he was a big stockholder in Richfield. And then Union built this one where Jerry Malone is. I think that was in maybe 1953 or 1954.

JY: Jerry's been there over twenty years, but I can't tell you how long.

LY: And so that was there then. That was the only stations for many, many years. And I think the next station was built then was probably the Shell station. And that was quite awhile after that.

JY: Oh, yes. That was quite a while because originally that

triangle was never to be developed where Sambo's and so forth are because they thought it would be a traffic hazzard. That was never to be developed, but, of course, eventually it was.

LY: You know, when we came in 1950, there was, in 1951, there was a lot of individual homes being built. And then, if memory serves me correctly, there was quite a lull.

JY: Yes, there was.

LY: There was maybe a ten-year span there when nothing happened. And then after that all at once Palm Desert then started growing like Topsy. And what we didn't talk about, and maybe would be interesting, because this started back some time ago, there was many efforts, you know, to incorporate. (cough) And one of the original efforts, and probably the most practical as I look back now, and I,m sure many would agree with me, Bob Anderson was the County Administrator and he came down one day and gave quite a talk. And that talk was this. Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, Palm Desert and Indian Wells should incorporate in one city.

JY: Well, that was before there was an Indian Wells.

LY: Well, no. Pete Petersen was down there.

JY: Yes, but it wasn't incorporated. It wasn't a city.

It was just . . .

LY: No, no, this is prior to being, any of them being incorporated.

JY: Yes.

LY: Simply because, he said, look, the expense. And it's not a city that's deep, they're right on the highway, on each side of the highway. And that way you can afford a city. Otherwise, I'm against it. And this was one reason for a long time that there was not much headway in incorporating anyplace. Indian Wells finally broke off and was able to do it. And then Rancho Mirage. Then Palm Desert. Now Cathedral City is trying. Add up all their budgets. They all have a city manager at a huge wage. They all have all these positions, duplications as far as I'm concerned, up and down the road. Each little community is paying for their own. And as I say, at the time Bob Anderson suggested it, I certainly didn't think there was any merit to it. I was only, my eyes were blinded. All I was interested in was Rancho Mirage. And then at one occasion Rancho Mirage and Palm Desert was trying to incorporate together. And when it started out, it was very feasible and would have

certainly have happened. Except we had one group here, and I'm speaking from experience, there were five people who wanted to go into the council as a unit. And they wanted nobody running against them and all this and that. Well, that turned everybody off in Rancho Mirage. And as a result, it was defeated. And Palm Desert always said Rancho Mirage defeated it. Well, I always point out that the majority didn't carry in Palm Desert either. Even though Rancho Mirage really put the stopper to it all together. So that failed. Then at one time Palm Desert tried to go alone and they tried to take part of Rancho Mirage. And as I remember, it was on the north side of the street all the way to Bob Hope Drive and down Bob Hope Drive would have been Palm Desert. And, of course, at that time, the Chamber of Commerce became very active. I, being one, and we made several trips to Riverside to protect our area from being annexed to this area. And so that effort failed. So there was many attempts to incorporate this area through here. It should have, as I look at it now, it should have all been done in one hat. They could have saved themselves a tremendous amount of money to be better used in other ways. But it didn't happen, and

here's a little funny thing that happened that might be interesting. There was always a lot of, oh, maybe I should, there was always a good feeling between the two towns, but areas, there wasn't towns, but there was a certain amount of competitiveness amongst the people. We were jealous of our area. Palm Desert was jealous of their area. And Don McNealy has been a figure in Palm Desert for many, many moons, years, and of course, I always was in that service station. And one day when I come back from lunch, the Palm Desert city limits sign was sitting right across from my station on the highway in front of what is now that burned-out place. There's nothing there. But it would be right across from the traffic light there in Rancho Mirage. You're aware of where I'm saying.

PY: You mean right around Magnesia Palms?

LY: Yes.

JY: Yes.

LY: Just west of Magnesia Palms. There it says Palm Desert city limits. What in the name of God has happened?

It always sat down and clear down where those restaurants are being built. So I called Sid Greenleaf, who was the president of the Chamber, and I said, hey, Sid, come down.

You're not going to believe this. And when he seen it, his hair just stood right straight up. And we called Frank Rays. Now Frank was a fellow who worked for Mr. Button and he was, he took care of the water works and just a general handyman. Take that sign and put it back where it belongs. So Frank did. And McNealy had gone to the state and got permission to move that sign. So when we had it moved, we did it on our own, and the state says, put that sign back. And it took Ron Button to straighten it out. He was the State Treasurer at that time. But that was just one of those things, you know. Don was always very ambitious. And he's still ambitious as the Chamber manager here in Palm Desert. He don't miss a beat. But at that time, he tried to take a half a mile of Rancho Mirage and put it into Palm Desert. And the sucker had done it behind their backs.

JY: Pat, has anybody spoken to you about the Desert Center at Desert County effort?

PY: No.

JY: Well,

JY: I can't tell you for how many years, but for quite

awhile after I had left the Palm Desert Corporation, I was involved with a group called the Coachella Valley Advisory Planning Commission. And this group was formed because Riverside County is such a large county, and with the County seat so far away for some of these people, there was really no government at all. No County government. If they wanted something, you'd have to drive a hundred and twenty miles to get to the County seat. So this group was formed to try to resolve some of the problems locally and make suggestions to the supervisors, and so forth. At one point it seemed they were getting nowhere, so a group of the men and Ted Smith was very much involved. He was the leader. I can't tell you the others at the time, there were about five of them. Attempted to form what would be known as Desert County so that our money would not be spent in Riverside. It would come back to our own area. And we would have facilities. This went on for some years. I think it got on the ballot once.

LY: No.

JY: No, it didn't get on the ballot? Oh. But when it looked like the people were getting enough excitement created that Desert County could become a separate entity, all

of a sudden we started getting more county facilities until now in Indio we have quite a convention of county buildings. And I think Blythe has some, don't they? But every once in awhile this Desert County still pops up. But this is something that you might want to explore further because it's quite interesting.

LY: You might tell where it was started, at Banning, wasn't it?

JY: I can't remember.

LY: Yes. It would start at Banning.

JY: And go to the river.

LY: Go to the river and Imperial County line, which in itself would have been a tremendously large county. And, of course, they had a lot of ammunition because . . .

JY: Our roads were horrible.

LY: We had nothing. We were the forgotten area, and then, of course, when the country club started coming in, this tremendous amount of increased assessed valuation just skyrocketed. And all the money was going out. We wasn't getting, I think at the time, believe me, I wouldn't want to be held to this, but I don't think forty percent of it was even coming back.

JY: No, no. It wasn't.

LY: It was a very small amount that we were getting back.

And it was very, very unfair and the county people who were endeavoring to start and form the Desert County certainly had a lot of ammunition and, but it didn't go and I wouldn't be able to foresee any time that it could go now.

JY: Well, now that they've supplied us with more county facilities, but you see, people wanted building permit, they had to go into Riverside. And anything you wanted to do with the county people, especially the people from even farther from us, we're sixty miles which is far enough, but . . .

LY: But think of the people from Blythe.

JY: That's right, a hundred and eighty miles to go to their county seat. And then as Les said, all of this money that was being collected went in there and you can see all the huge buildings they have in their county buildings. However, that did finally bring some more facilities to our area. So that was helpful.

PY: What time period was this?

LY: It had to be in the late fifties or early sixties.

JY: Yes, yes. I would say the late fifties.

LY: You're probably right.

JY: Because you see we came here in 1954. I'd say the late fifties.

LY: It wasn't too long after that.

JY: No.

LY: Because Ted Smith came here from . . .

JY: Sacramento.

LY: South Gate, no, South Gate.

JY: Oh, South Gate.

LY: And his wife worked for Ron Button originally.

JY: Yes.

LY: And then they came down here, and she continued to work for Ron.

JY: You're not thinking of Roy St. Leon's wife.

LY: No, no. I'm thinking of Ted Smith's wife.

JY: Oh, really. I didn't know she did too.

LY: They both did. Then Roy came down. She took Ted's place, I think. Because Ted also worked for Button. Anybody who worked for Button didn't last too long.

PY: Now did Ron Button have, was it Ron?

JY: Yes.

LY: Yes.

PY: Did he have a ranch here?

JY: He owned Rancho Mirage.

LY: He bought it from the original developer. He and a fellow by the name of Dave, oh boy, I can't tell you, but nevertheless, Ron owned it. Everything that hadn't been sold, he bought from the original developer. And that was another thing I was going to mention that I didn't. When we were talking about the lull in building and all at once Palm Desert did start building. Rancho Mirage never did. So when it incorporated, all at once everybody found Rancho Mirage. And the building just took off at such a pace, you know, and that's of course the reason they had to make it, have a moratorium on building there, it got out of hand. There were so many people coming into that area. Of course, Palm Desert had a lot of it, too. But Rancho Mirage really had a lot. And, but it went along there from 1951 to 1975 and people hardly knew it was there. But once it incorporated, it was just like Topsy. It started growing and never quit. I don't know where or when it's going to quit. Personally, I was really in favor of incorporation. At this point, I would have wished they hadn't. It's become a plaything in my opinion of five people and none of them are qualified. This is true in any city. I think our original budget there should have

been around two hundred and fifty thousand a year, between two hundred and fifty and three hundred thousand a year to run the city. My God, it was over a million dollars before they ever got started. Now I have no idea what the budget is, probably eight, ten, twelve million. Maybe even more. And they're able to do this without any property tax. But one day when all the building runs out they're going to be, they're going to have a little trouble. The developers now are keeping the city treasury full. But once the developers run out of places to develop and so forth, they're going to have a bureaucracy that's got to be supported. And there's only one way you support a bureaucracy and that's taxes.

JY: Yes.

LY: And the city has the authority to tax the first dollar without going through the voter. So these are things that I look at now older and wiser and in my opinion we've only ever had one councilman in Rancho that knew anything, and he resigned. The others were just people who knew nothing. They hire somebody to run it, run the city. In other words, they put the city under a dictator really because the City Manager is the boss. He hires and he fires. He is the . . .

JY: Well, he's the only one trained.

LY: Yes. So these other people go in there, they make decisions that effect people, really effect people. You have a piece of property that, and they say whether you can do this or that with it. And they are not qualified is what I'm saying. They have a planning commission, don't know straight up. You know what I'm saying? Not only in Rancho Mirage, but so many places. It's all politics. That's the problem. People get a little power and they go crazy.

JY: Oh, I just noticed the mail truck go by. That's another thing that we have seen happen, you know. For so many years we didn't have mail delivery until, when was it they . . .

LY: I don't know, but the first time I saw Rancho Mirage, all the post office boxes were in the middle of the velt with a shed built over them. And the delivery man from Indio would deliver the mail there and put them in these. And there was, I think, forty or fifty boxes, so you know there was a lot of people lived on the ranches around there.

JY: Yes.

LY: Yes.

PY: When did they first come to Palm Desert?

JY: Mail delivery, you mean? Well, I don't know. Of course, we had the post office when we first came here in 1954. There was a little adobe post office. But house to house delivery, I would say maybe ten years ago.

LY: Probably ten, twelve.

JY: You know, after you've been away from it, you really have to grasp to think back. And now we've talked at meetings about the Palm Desert Players Group. And I remember at one time there was that, that reminded me then of that big water reservoir that was right down on Highway 111.

LY: That's what I mentioned there was a barber shop there.

JY: Oh, you mentioned that.

LY: That was the only thing on the highway for many, many years. The only barber shop in Palm Springs and Indio.

JY: Well, and then Angelo's.

LY: Oh, yes. That was quite a place.

JY: That was there.

LY: Angelo's. Tony was the manager. What was . . .

JY: Pasquala, or something.

LY: Oh.

JY: That's the forerunner of the Sunshine

LY: Tony Pasella.

JY: Yes.

LY: But the Desert Air used to have, do you have this on?

The Desert Air used to have a luau every spring prior to the closing. Was one of the big events of the desert. There would be generally a thousand plus people. They would fly Hilo Hattie in and her group for the entertainment. And the first hour or two of the entertainment, why, Goerty would furnish all the drinks on the house. And I have seen, oh gee, the crowds you wouldn't believe, that attended this. That finally went by the wayside and we also had another thing that he did each and every year, and that was at Christmastime. He always had Santa Claus fly in.

JY: That's right.

LY: And it was the biggest event on the desert because everybody within miles and miles brought their kids. And they all got a present, and they could see Santa Claus come in and come in by airplane. They'd fly him in and these kids, and that was always a big event. That was on Christmas day. And so that is a memory, too, that I cherish because it was a nice gesture on his part and must have cost him a lot of money. There were

literally hundreds of gifts, you know, just hundreds of gifts. But Mr. Goerty was one of the true pioneers of the desert and if you could get to Hank, he could tell you things probably, too, that even came before I came and before a lot of people came.

PY: Were a lot of people, you said that the post office was a real congregating place.

JY: Yes.

PY: Does Angelo's serve

LY: At a bar. a bar.

JY: This Angelo's was a bar and . . .

LY: Restaurant.

JY: Restaurant. Now someone that I think could talk to you about not so much this part of Palm Desert, but about the development of Palm Desert Country Club would be Hal Holsworth.

PY: I've talked to him.

JY: Oh, have you talked to, oh, good. Now when they were living in Los Angeles and they would drive out there to that place out there in Washington, they'd always stop at Angelo's for their supper. Or maybe before they'd go back in, they'd stop. And that was quite a place. They had a bar and I don't know what they served, oh, spaghetti,

it was an Italian place, yes. And I guess that was probably about the only place like that until you got to Palm Springs.

LY: That's right.

JY: For many years.

LY: Well, no, there was a place right at the edge of Cathedral City. Tommy Barker's.

JY: Oh, yes. Tommy Barker's, yes.

LY: The most famous restaurant that ever was.

JY: Chicken and ribs.

LY: The best fried chicken.

JY: Greasy as could be.

LY: The best fried chicken that was ever put out anyplace, anywhere, any time. And that was . . .

JY: Yes, that was a place to go.

LY: On the corner of which is now Frank Sinatra Drive. At that time it was Wonder Palms Road and Highway 111.

JY: Yes.

LY: Now, of course, it's all filled full of restaurants and service stations and all that, but you could go to Tommy Barker's and get your chicken and take it out or . . .

JY: That's where Cask and Cleaver is now.

LY: Yes.

JY: That's where it is, it was Tommy Barker's.

LY: And then it went to Forest Hills.

JY: Forest Inn.

LY: Forest Inn, and now Forest Inn is now Rancho Mirage.

It sort of came down. He was supposed to have given
his chicken recipe to but I'll swear he
never did.

JY: No.

LY: And then he opened a restaurant in this end where is now
Oil Can Harry's, I think.

JY: That's right, he did.

LY: That place in there. And then he went to Desert Hot
Springs. He floated around.

JY: Yes.

LY: But the most famous restaurant on the desert.

JY: But really . . .

LY: And then the Palm House in Palm Springs.

JY: Yes.

LY: Ethel Streebey's, what was it?

JY: Hideaway.

LY: Dollhouse.

JY: The dollhouse.

LY:

LY: Dollhouse.

JY: Yes. Well, insofar as Palm Desert per se or Rancho Mirage, but Angelo's was really about the only place to eat at that time.

LY: Tony still lives here.

JY: He lives in La Quinta. I think he lives in La Quinta.

LY: Tony Pacella, P-A-C-E-L-L-A.

JY: Yes. And Marilyn.

LY: I didn't remember what his wife's name was.

JY: Marilyn. He then opened the Red Barn, but never really made much of a go of it. I don't know who's running that now. Remember when he had the Red Barn?

LY: Yes. Tony is really one of the oldtimers and he lived in Rancho Mirage when I moved there because he was managing that Angelo's at that time.

JY: But if you could talk to Mrs. Ekert and her husband because her late husband and she owned what is now the Houston Lumber.

LY: They came from Indio. They owned a lumber company in Indio.

JY: Yes. But I can't think of their name. Lorene, but I can't think of their other name. It might be good to talk with Anne before you contact them, Anne Carpenter.

LY: She'd know their names.

JY: I think they live at El Dorado, but I'm not sure. But I'm just trying to think, then remember Betty, it was later Betty . . . oh, Marianne what's her name, had that restaurant, kind of a coffee shop.

LY: Marianne.

JY: Marianne had that coffee shop. But I know Anne knows about that. That little coffee shop. I can just see her. She had kind of a skin problem, so she, this is how she'd wash her dishes. She'd hold it like this, then she'd take a brush and dip it in the dishwater.

LY: She was a very good friend of Anne Nattenson's.

JY: Oh, was she?

LY: That's the way I met her. And didn't she operate in there about where the Secondhand Rose is now?

JY: Yes. Oh, I'll tell you exactly where it was. She had, it's on the corner there, where it was Betty's cafe, and now I think it's the real estate office.

LY: Probably is.

JY: It's on a corner across from, she was just across from Dan Carpenter's furniture store, which now is that China house.

LY: Marianne and her husband, then her husband died.

JY: Marianne McGregor.

LY: I don't know the name. I don't remember.

JY: But I was just trying to think. There were so few things here when we came in here.

LY: But it was good, it was nice. You'd go down the street, everybody you seen you knew. And maybe that's good and maybe it's bad. People shouldn't, you know, just because you're first doesn't mean somebody else can't come in. And, of course, anyplace that's nice that has a charm to it is going to draw people.

JY: Good and bad.

LY: Good and bad.

JY: With the influx of people, we've also had an influx of crime. Well, just the last couple of months, did you read Les' dog letter in the paper. That's what we were laughing about earlier.

PY: No.

JY: We had an awful problem with dogs and a very dear friend of ours Christmas day we visited her in the hospital. She was attacked by a dog. And that's, you know, the more you grow, the more problems you have, but . . .

PY: Right as you're heading, I don't know what direction it is, unless it's south . . .

JY: Toward what town?

PY: On Rio Del Sol. Oh, that was Why was
Frank Sinatra Drive renamed?

LY: Well, it was renamed for the same reason Bob Hope Drive was renamed. I didn't really finish that. That got in to be, that got to be a very heavy. What really happened then, I was, I don't know whether I was president, at least I was on the Board of Directors of the Rancho Mirage Property Owners. And at the next meeting after Cliff had approached me as to changing the name, I brought it up and asked for their endorsement as to whether or not they would endorse the change, the name change. They needed it because at that time the Chamber and the property owners had quite a bit of influence with the County Board of Supervisors because they were really representing the people. And so the group thought it would be a good idea, so they did endorse it. And I carried the word back to Cliff, and I said, well, Cliff, we've endorsed it and we'd like to see it, though, as Hope Drive because of the hospital and its hope for those who are ill and so forth. And that's the way it went, but one way or another, Marian over here got into it, Marian Henderson. And I was

really glad she did because when the opposition started and two of the really, two people who were really heavy on it was Lloyd Tevis and Hilda Mayer. And they lived across from each other on the road. In fact, they became so vehement that Lloyd even wrote many letters to Bob Hope just really tearing him to pieces. In fact, it was so bad that when we was going to have, you know, the . . .

JY: Dedication.

LY: Dedication of the name change, we couldn't because Hope wouldn't appear and he wanted nothing to do with it. He was completely shattered or whatever. In other words, he was too big. He didn't need it. And so Marian then got the credit. She stuck her two bits in worth and I was very glad because some people got very upset about it. I would have lost business over it if it had gotten back to me. But fortunately it didn't. It stopped. Even though Lloyd knew it. He came to a couple of property owners meetings with copies of letters that he had written to Bob Hope. And I told him on one occasion I just couldn't believe, you know, that anybody could write this kind of letter. It was so narrow minded, so, but in the transition, when Marian got in it, instead of being

Hope Drive it went to Bob Hope Drive. And that's how it got its name, so shortly after that Tamarsk realized that they was loosing a maybe a little publicity. Of course, the supervisors went for it hook, line and sinker, so there was no problem getting Bob Hope changed. So right away then all the movie stars wanted a road named after them. The next one was Frank Sinatra. Well, he lived on the street, see.

JY: Yes.

LY: And Frank had his place on it, Wonder Palms which is now Frank Sinatra. So they petitioned the County to change that name, which the County did. So just to show you the egotism and, well, maybe that isn't it, but whatever goes with it, at that time I was the president of the Chamber of Commerce in Rancho Mirage. And we wanted Lucille Ball for the honorary mayor. We used to elect honorary mayors. And so we had some correspondence with Lucille Ball. And I've still got the letter. I got it back and where she said that she wouldn't be able to accept that, but she would just love to have her name on a street in Rancho Mirage. And if that could be arranged, you know, and all that sort of thing, very well done, that, so she never got an answer. But the

other night I was going someplace, to a meeting apparently, and I had the radio on and they was interviewing Phil Harris. It was before Christmas. And they was kidding him. I don't know whether it was KWCY, I guess, in Cathedral City. They was kidding him about not having a road named for him. And he said, well, he always felt that Country Club Drive should be Phil Harris Drive.

JY: Oh, really! (laughter)

LY: And I have to agree with him. You know, he was really responsible for an awful lot.

JY: Yes.

LY: Of that stuff out there. And, but he said at that time, said, and I just thought of it when you were talking about it. You said on the radio just within the last two weeks, he felt that . . .

JY: That should be his street.

LY: That should be Phil Harris, not Country Club, which it is now. Of course, it will never be changed now. They don't dare to do it anymore.

JY: No, because it connects too many of the Country drives.

LY: Well, no, that, but . . .

JY: Then everybody would want to have

LY: It couldn't be Bob Hope Drive again; it couldn't be Frank Sinatra Drive again. Too many people would fight it.

JY: Yes.

LY: And even though I don't see anything wrong with it, a lot of people take a picture of that sign, you know, Bob Hope Drive and Frank Sinatra Drive. That's like Sunset and . . .

JY: Vine.

LY: Vine. Yes. All the time you see people out there snapping a picture of it. They've been on the corner of Bob Hope and 111, or Bob Hope and Frank Sinatra. But when you get through with growing up, I guess that's what you call it, of a community, which I have and which it has too. See it go from really nothing, I mean nothing, to what it is today, a very thriving, small city. You see so many things that have happened that shouldn't happen. You see so many things that should have happened and didn't happen. And jealousies and all that is . . .

JY: Well, I've said you see grown men acting like children.

LY: It proves, you know, that hindsight is so much better than foresight. You just see these things and it looks

so plain to you after it happened, after the fact.

PY: There are still some old buildings on Bob Hope Drive this side of Country Club, between Country Club and 111. What were they? They back under just a couple of date groves and they're selling some of the acreage now.

LY: Those were ranch houses, a lot of them were ranch houses. You see, these people would own their ranch, and then they would hire somebody to run it. And generally it was somebody from Oklahoma or Arkansas. They were very good people. That's the reason there's a lot of Okies out here and a lot of Arkies. They came out and went to work in these places, and some went back, they got some money and went home. And in those days the money you made out here was, you know, like a fortune compared to what you could make back in Arkansas or what you could make in Oklahoma. And a lot of fellows came out and worked awhile and then went back. And so they lived in these houses. And generally it was pretty good housing. But today, of course, it isn't. They're just going in and bulldozing it all out. And along with all the date groves and all the grape ranches, and these are things that tear you up. You wouldn't

believe the date groves we used to have out in this area. And the grape vineyards out in this area. You know, they supported the packing house out here.

JY: Well, and then remember . . .

LY: Today they don't even have enough for you to go and pick for the table use.

JY: In the spring then, all that area out where the hospital is now in the spring it used just be one car after the verbena, just beautiful.

LY: Oh, yes. Seen a lot of flowers out here. On one occasion in 1950, I think with this big rain I'm telling about, and this is something else that used to happen that don't happen anymore, if we had a rain in the summertime . . .

JY: August.

LY: August or July. If we had a rain within, what, three hours, two hours, six hours, there would be so many black crickets you couldn't walk. Your hair would be full of them, the streets would be full of them. At night if you had a light on outside it would turn black. Restaurants couldn't serve food hardly, it was that bad. These crickets would come by the billions. That don't happen anymore. What happened to them?

JY: Well, I know that . . .

LY: Somebody could tell you.

JY: The mosquito bait were dusted because that was one of the things when I was with the CBACP we were working on. They planted bait different places and they had to get, I don't know, Hal could tell you more about this, they, it was so planted that it killed the eggs. And why they appeared after the warm rains, the warmth and the moisture made them hatch out.

LY: They'd lay there dormant for ten years.

JY: They could lay dormant, I think, five or seven years.
Yes.

LY: You'd never see them.

JY: That's why . . .

LY: Then it would rain and they'd come out like magic.

JY: Yes.

LY: I seen one time here when the flowers were so profuse, this was in fifty-two or three, before you came down, the flowers were so profuse the desert was literally covered. Then we had a tremendous billions of caterpillars.

JY: Oh! Yes.

LY: That went, they all headed south.

JY: We've had them since I've been here, too.

LY: Not like this time. You could sweep them, you could do this or that. The road became greasy. They were a traffic hazzard of the tremendous amount of caterpillars. And if I remember right, they brought sheep in finally to eat the verbena up and the forage that was left from the rains. But the rains on the desert used to be magic. Today we're having so many rains that I don't think it has time to recharge itself, if you know what I mean. The verbena used to be, we wouldn't have the rain, you know, we'd have it like now. That would be the last rain. The whole year you'd have maybe an inch, an inch and a half, for the whole year. That would be all, and it would all come at once. If you had a rain like in November or December, everybody starts in, oh, my gosh, maybe we'll have flowers this year, never nothing. Now the last number of years, I don't know how many, every year it rains and rains and rains. Every year the flowers get less and less and less.

JY: Yes. Well, of course, that's because of the subdivision, too.

LY: Well, that, but . . .

JY: Taking a lot of them.

LY: They just don't seem to get recharged, that is, the seed don't get scattered. I don't know what it is, but those are things that don't happen anymore. But the caterpillar invasion, that was the one thing I'd never forget.

JY: Well, then remember the one year when the butterflies, oh, I never will forget driving down, it was just like a cloud, and it was butterflies.

LY: They come from the caterpillars, see. When the caterpillars hatched, then the next thing was butterflies.

JY: Just a cloud! Oh, it was almost like back in the middle west, you had screens on your cars for the grasshoppers.

LY: You'd drive a mile, the windshield was so greasy you couldn't, you know, you couldn't see through it and you couldn't get them off. It was . . .

JY: We don't have that anymore.

LY: No, those are things that don't happen. And that's progress that has erased the things that used to happen every once in awhile. And they didn't happen often enough to become boring.

JY: No. No. It was spectacular when you did . . .

LY: Right. Oh, we used to, you know, there was about two weeks when we'd be fortunate enough to have this flower display.

JY: Oh, beautiful.

LY: That the roads would be solid, people would come from, you know, within a day's drive, just to see this phenomenon of nature.

JY: Solid verbena, then it would be the yellow flowers and then occasionally the white primroses. And everybody made bird cages.

LY: But that was, that don't happen anymore. You'll see a small piece in the paper generally that flowers are blooming someplace. You know, the verbena is out. But, I don't know, have you found anybody yet that went through the last big earthquake they had around here?

PY: No.

LY: Somebody that lived here in the late forties. There was an earthquake at that point that was pretty heavy. So it might if you find somebody to tell you about that. That would be interesting. Because I do know that that was a pretty good shake. In fact, we was just talking about it the other night. Who was I talking about it to?

JY: I don't know. I was trying to think.

LY: That was here that knew about it.

JY: Well, let's see, who was it? The Mungers and the Gyes, maybe they would know.

LY: No, neither one of them . . . these mountains just exploded around here. You couldn't see them for days.

JY: Oh, Lucy Ann, Lucy Ann.

LY: Oh, Lucy Ann. Was she here then?

JY: Lucy Ann Babitt. Yes, Lucy Ann Babitt. Now she's the member. She's very hard to get ahold of, but Lucy Ann would be a very good one for you to interview because Lucy Ann has been with Western Air, Babitt, B-A-B-I-T-T, has been with Western Airlines for thirty-three years, and has been down here. She opened the first Western Airline counter in Palm Springs, and I can't remember when that was.

LY: Been a long time ago.

JY: But . . .

LY: In the forties.

JY: But, she and her husband actually started what is now KGUY radio. And she would be an excellent one for you to interview.

LY: Because we started it that night and she took me right up on it, started telling me about it.

JY: Oh, yes.

LY: Because I wasn't, all I had from it was what people told me, and . . .

JY: Oh, wait a minute. Was it Lucy Ann or was it, no, it wasn't Lucy Ann, it was Frances, Frances Corey, that was telling you. But Lucy Ann, it was Frances Corey because Frances Corey was working at Bullock's in Palm Springs at that time. But call Lucy Ann and ask her how far back she goes. Three, four, six, one, four, eight; three, four, six, one, four, eight, one.

PY: Do you have anything else that you can think of?

LY: Well, I'll tell you, you know where the road used to go around the mountain, right across the street from there was a building, and at various times that building had in it doctors' offices, quacks, by the way. It had a candy factory in it at one time.

JY: Real estate.

LY: Real estate, and then Frank Dunn eventually bought it, you know, and then he turned it in and it had that bar in it. Oh, I know. Then they finally turned it around and it has ended up Marigold Waters Real Estate office.

JY: Oh, that place! Oh, oh, yes. I thought you meant . . .

LY: That was, that went through, but nobody knows it was a candy factory once, at one time, in Rancho Mirage. And I guess that's the only claim to fame really that building's got outside of the fact there was doctors in

it that would come down from, some guy had to going these machines, you know, that had, I don't know, they put a charge of electricity in you or something.

JY: Oh, that's a good idea.

LY: Yes. But anyhow . . . I think I've told you about all I know. Probably not, but it's all I can think of.

JY: Well, there's always another time.